



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Deanna Alexander, 18th District

For Immediate Release: May 25, 2017

Contact: Brian Rothgery, Public Information Manager
414-278-4230 or brian.rothgery@milwaukeecountywi.gov

Rescinding Raises While Blaming Workers Will Hurt Milwaukee County

MILWAUKEE – The Milwaukee County Board voted Thursday to reverse raises other county officials had granted employees over the past several years.

The Committee of the Whole adopted the resolution 16 to 1. Supervisor Deanna Alexander was the lone dissenting vote and released the following statement:

"Supervisors rescinded raises with no notice to the employees affected. This will have a significant negative impact on the county's ability to recruit and retain talent.

"The District Attorney's office testified that a special investigator, who was recruited from another state, will be forced to contend with an immediate 23% cut to her \$61,000 salary with virtually no notice from her employer. She never received a raise – but was instead offered a starting salary in-line with similar positions across the nation. While she accepted the job to help track down car-stealing thieves and the drug addicts robbing pharmacies, she will certainly be a victim of the County Board's knee-jerk reaction to learning that it has the legal authority to alter previously granted salary raises.

"As the District Attorney's office recognized, "When the elephants fight, the ants get trampled!"

"The political spat between the county board and the county executive is having a horrible chilling effect on staff morale and must stop.

"The Milwaukee County Board's decision today to hastily cut salaries of hardworking public servants, such as our special investigators, was predicated on thin reasoning and is quite simply, bad management.

"This action will further demoralize existing employees and make it even more difficult to hire new employees who are among the best and most qualified in their respective fields.

"While the supporters of this action may tout that the salaries are 'illegal,' or that they voted today to 'save taxpayer dollars,' the reality is that employees accepted raises because their supervisors and department heads granted them, and the small amount of tax dollars being saved will likely be lost to continuing legal fees and the cost of retraining when staff turnover unnecessarily increases.

"A reasonable and evenhanded approach was needed; instead, the County Board unfortunately chose hot-headed retaliation, aimed at the County Executive, but landing on employees.

###